



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICE

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CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

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March 7, 2011

To: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe

From: Richard Sanchez
Chief Information Officer

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard Sanchez", is written over the "From:" line and extends into the "To:" list.

SECURITY BREACH INVOLVING CONFIDENTIAL SOCIAL SERVICES RECORDS

On March 1, 2011, the Internal Services Department (ISD) was notified that a portable unencrypted external hard drive containing confidential DPSS client records was stolen from an employee's vehicle. The ISD employee, who provides application support for DPSS systems, had left the hard drive overnight in his automobile that was burglarized.

This hard drive contained 325,599 records from DPSS' Integrated Benefit Payment System, which was retired in 1997. Approximately 180,428 of these records included client Social Security numbers (SSN).

There is no evidence that an unauthorized individual has actually retrieved and is using client personal data. However, DPSS will be mailing notification letters, in accordance with County policy, alerting clients with SSNs present on the hard drive of this security breach and steps they can take to protect themselves of any possible misuse of their personal identity. Since the data is more than 14 years old in many cases, DPSS and ISD are working to validate addresses for these clients to ensure timely notification.

DPSS and ISD are working with the County's Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) to take remedial measures to ensure that this situation is not repeated. This includes steps to increase employee security awareness and appropriate handling of portable computing devices that store confidential/sensitive data.

If you have any questions, please contact me or your staff may contact Robert Pittman, County's CISO, at 213-253-5631 or rpittman@cio.lacounty.gov.

RS:RP:pa

c: William T Fujioka
Board IT Deputies
Chief Deputy Executive Officers
County Counsel
Tom Tindall, Director, Internal Services
Philip L. Browning, Director, Public Social Services